Secret ballot for recognition of employee unions in Railways

†3309. SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the way has been cleared for 'secret ballot' method for recognizing employee unions in Railways; and

(b) if so, by when this election is likely to be held and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Based on the Judgement of Hon'ble High Court, Madras dated 17.10.2003 and Order of Hon'ble Supreme Court dated 8.3.2004, it has been proposed to decide the exclusive membership of the Railway employees to unions through secret ballot to grant recognition to the Railway Unions. A Committee has been constituted to work out the modalities for conducting secret ballot. Elections will be held after modalities are framed.

Proposal for survey work for gauge conversion

†3310. SHRI KRISHAN LAL BALMIKI:
SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of proposals of railway tracks included with regard to performing survey work for gauge conversion in the railway budget for the year 2005-06 and 2007-08;

(b) time limit fixed for completing above metioned survey work of gauge conversion; and

(c) the norms fixed for sanctioning the gauge conversion work after completion of survey work?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) In the Budget 2005-06, 8 nos. of surveys for gauge conversion were included out of which 3 have been completed. In the

†Original notice of the question was received in mind

budget 2007-08, 3 surveys have been included. These surveys are likely to be completed by 2008-09.

(c) The policy for taking up gauge conversion to carry out the conversion of lines at least cost yet providing a standard of service not lower than what the rail users were getting on the Metre Gauge covers the following areas:

(i) To take up conversion of lines to develop alternative BG routes obviating the need for doubling existing BG lines on these routes.

(ii) To establish new BG links between stations connected by other BG lines.

(iii) To establish BG connection to ports, industrial centres and locations having potential for growth.

(iv) To take up conversion of lines required on strategic considerations.

(v) To minimize transshipment and to improve wagon turn around by avoiding delays at transshipment points.

Further, those projects are considered to be financially viable which yield a rate of return of 14% or more under the discounted cash flow method.

Extra charges on passengers under Tatkal Scheme

3311. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that even a passenger terminates his journey in the midway, he is to pay for journey from originating station to terminating station under Tatkal Scheme;

(b) if so, whether Railways is allocating the vacant berth to another passenger; and

(c) the estimated earnings of Railways from such cases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) As per provision of modified Tatkal Scheme circulated in the year 2004, the booking under this scheme is to be done only from originating to terminating point of the train with boarding facility from intermediate